



**OFFICE OF THE
DEPUTY PRESIDENT**

**TALKING NOTES FOR H.E RIGATHI GACHAGUA, EGH,
DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC KENYA, DURING
THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE QUESTA CARE
PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY ON WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER 15, 2023 IN NAIROBI**

- **The Principal Secretary State Department for Medical Services, Harry Kimtai;**
- **Our host, Governor Johnson Sakaja;**
- **The Board and Management of Questa Care;**
- **Distinguished Guests;**

1. We mark an incredible milestone in the Medical Manufacturing Sector, with the entry of Questa Care Pharmaceutical company into Kenya. Valued at over 1.5 Billion Kenya Shillings, Questa Care has affirmed that our country is an investment destination of choice in Africa. We thank you for the confidence in us.

2. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, countries like Kenya that heavily rely on importation of pharmaceuticals and other goods, faced grave challenges due to disruption of supply chains.

With local manufacturing, we are closing such gaps and advancing towards affordable healthcare. Furthermore, this is a major boost to realisation of Universal Healthcare as per the Kenya Kwanza Plan.

3. This step of Questa Care investing in Kenya, happens at a time the pharmaceutical industry is facing stiff competition from counterfeit drugs.

A joint research by the Kenya Medical Association, Kenya Association of Pharmaceutical Industry and Pharmaceutical Society of Kenya, established that up to 30 percent of medicines and drugs in the country are counterfeit.

It is a syndicate estimated at 15 billion Kenya Shillings.

4. On a global scale, Africa accounts for up to 42 per cent of fake drugs. The UN warns that over 500,000 deaths in Africa are linked to substandard products.

Such drugs offer false hope of recovery to patients. In some cases, it may worsen the situation given that the veracity and efficacy of the components are unverified.

5. Counterfeits, fake and falsified drugs are a threat to our people. They are a threat to life. They are a threat to livelihoods.

6. Medical drugs are not to kill. Drugs are to improve the quality of life. That is why we are encouraging local production to improve availability and affordability of quality supplies. This is one of the ways of edging out cartels dealing in counterfeits.

7. While this is the long-term strategy, it is not enough. The Ruto Administration is implementing the Universal Health Coverage.

We are promoting preventive healthcare to the grassroots. Our aim is to reduce the cost of treatment in half and ultimately, set our people free from diseases as was defined upon independence in 1963.

8. The Pharmacy and Poisons Board must intensify the crack down on manufacturing and trafficking of counterfeit pharmaceuticals across the country.

We have allocated resources to facilitate the Regulatory body in delivering on this assignment. Our security agencies are at your disposal. A multi-agency approach is key in complementing your efforts in physical and online surveillance.

Drugs must not kill our people alongside diseases. Already, the disease burden is consuming a lot of resources, impairing development.

9. Further, surveillance is not an event. It should not happen today because we have raised concerns.

It MUST be a continuous exercise - not only for the Pharmacy and Poisons Board- it is a responsibility of everyone.

10. That is why we also need to raise public awareness on how to check genuineness of drugs via smartphones.

Even those without smartphones should be able to send text and receive status of the medication. It should not end there. The public must know how to report to the relevant authorities for action.

11. While crackdowns are crucial in nabbing dealers of such fake drugs, we ask the security and other involved agencies to put the health of the country first

by ensuring that those arrested are severely punished.

Officers aiding the syndicate are not part of us.

They belong to JAIL.

12. We will continue improving the investment environment as part of our strategy of building a resilient economy. We are promoting local production for better health outcomes.

In local production, we will spend less and less foreign currency, in importation.

13. While we are doing so, Questa Care and other local manufacturers can only be ahead in the game by investing in Robust Research and Development Programmes.

14. Your products are as good as your Investment in Research. This is how you will produce cutting-edge products to compete and diminish the demand for imports.

ASANTENI SANA